

Re: Request from Community Art Center - Inbox - Yahoo Mail

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Re: Request from Community Art Center

Thursday, September 17, 2015 10:31 PM

From: "Ken Ehresman" <Ken@atrecycle.com>
 To: "bren429@yahoo.com" <bren429@yahoo.com>
 Cc: "Ken Ehresman" <Ken@atrecycle.com>
 "Ken Ehresman" <Ken@atrecycle.com>
 "Dave Ehresman" <dave@atrecycle.com>
 "Brodie Ehresman" <Brodie@atrecycle.com>
 "Roger Potter" <roger.potter@gmail.com> [more ...](#)

*Jenkins House
 301 S. Mill St*

Good Evening Brenda,

Ken here... WOW! Barb passed this along to me..... I gotta tell you, this couldn't be better timing.... so check this out:

Saturday the 26th is Barb's Surprise B-Day party (50) and celebration in her fight against Breast Cancer. She has many childhood friends attending that she hasn't seen in 30+ years. She and I are in Love with this old house and would love to open our home to anyone interested in helping preserve it in art. No need to worry about porches, fences or other boundaries, we will all be here having a GRAND TIME!!!! having said that, is it possible to somehow incorporate this into her Birthday and actually get to purchase a painting of the house for her? that would be like SO AWESOME!!! please provide details and cost if available...

Now to the History of this old house. We are unsure of who Jenkins where or why they built it but Bob Sear at Livingston County Historical society might be able to provide more detail... Here are a couple interesting facts I can share with you. Mr. and Mrs. Robert Dievendorf and their son Dick, bought this house and moved in I think in the 40's or 50's ish.... it went through a major remodel in the early sixties where the back porch was removed and turned into an expanded Kitchen, the rear staircase was partially removed to accommodate the new entrance to the west side of the house, and the open staircase leading to the 2nd floor was enclosed. Much to our surprise, when we were viewing the house, all the original pieces of trim, staircase parts, and doors removed during the remodel were in fact preserved in the attic. this was one of the MAJOR selling points to us, as it would assist us in remodeling it back into a more period correct configuration. Additionally, there was a story that the house next to this house was originally on this corner and was moved in 1890 to make way for this house. it was difficult to substantiate if this story was or was not true. BUT we did uncover some facts that lead us to believe it is most likely true... below are those "facts"

- The two foundations on both houses were exactly the same, constructed of the same material, brick flooring, matching bricks molded from the same plant the same year. hmmm clue #1
- The house was removed for expansion and a garage, it was pretty run down, but the architecture pointed to a much earlier home than it appeared from the outside 60's aluminum siding,
 - Clue three, the windows went almost all the way to the floor on the 1st floor, typical of mid 1800's homes
 - Staircase Bannister, which we removed and saved, was VERY short and built from typical 1800's materials
 - The house was built with a center beam, that as it was being demolished was discovered to have been worked by hand with hand tools with joints for floor joist consistent with mid 1800's methods
 - Upon further investigation, there was indeed a house depicted on the corner where our house now sits in a map dated 1869 see here: <http://www.loc.gov/item/73693369/>
 - Notice house at corner of Grove and Mill, and the type of house, the windows and construction configuration matches EXACTLY what was the basic structure of the house we removed.
 - Notice 3 front windows on 2nd floor and one centered attic window. this was the EXACT construction of the house next to ours.



Too many coincidences we think...we are confident there is truth in that story. Additionally, in 1890 most large lots were not sub divided down allowing for the smaller houses being built in between the large corner lots, this typically didn't happen until the 1920's and beyond...

Here are some interesting and fun facts we have compiled...

As a young boy, Dick had a paper route in Pontiac, and under the built in cabinet in dining room drawer, he kept a changed lock box with his money. The chain and the lock still exist there today, but the lock box and money has long been removed.

Dick had a relative I believe on his moms side of the family that was a champion Newfoundland Breeder in Newfoundland or Labrador... after purchasing the house he learned we had a Newfoundland dog and after stated how ironic it was that we chose that breed and how his mother would love to know we had "newfies" in the house...

According to the landscaping firm that did some work for us during a recent renovation, the Beach tree to the south side of the house is the 2nd largest beach tree he has seen in the State of Illinois. We are not stating it is the 2nd largest but that is it a HIGHLY unusual tree that is this large in stature...

The first floor is appointed with high quality White Oak trim, built in cabinets, as well as flooring, while the second floor trim and cabinets were all secondary woods mostly southern hard Pine. This was typical of the era to spend more on public accessible rooms, while maintaining a more reasonable cost and construction on private areas.

We acquired the house to the west of this house 2 years ago and are restoring it as our Daughter lives in it. This is one of only 2 known Lustron Steel homes to exist in Pontiac, of only 2,500 built and delivered between 1947 and 1950 when the company went bankrupt. The Lustron home was advertised and billed as a "maintenance free home" and I can attest, it maintains its original roof and exterior panels from 1950 and have never been changed. How many homes can claim that and here we sit 65 years later and it was truly a house before it's time. Just a neat fact.

This stately home has a picture perfect view of the courthouse, downtown, and what would have been the mill back when it was in operation from it's second story balcony. 2nd story balconies were common on older homes but often lost during updates. The doorway to the balcony was converted to a window in the 1960's remodel and the balcony was left vacant for many years. We have since restored that window to a door which now opens from the master bedroom to the small balcony where you can enjoy your coffee and watch all the traffic and downtown activities early mornings. What a neat space.

An original Virginia Diaz painting of the Mill at Mill street bridge was left by Dick to us upon purchasing the house. We later discovered as we removed it from the wall to store it, it had all Virginia's notes on the back about when it was painted, how, with what materials, and all the details on Mary's purchase of the artwork. Mary had placed her notes below Virginia's about the purchase, and we asked Dick to also place his notes about gifting it to the house where it now resides facing where the Mill would have stood proudly displayed as part of the house.

She creeks and moans, is temperamental, and requires constant attention and upkeep which will last forever. We are hopeful now that the porch has been repaired, to have the house painted it's original colors in the Spring of 2016. Thanks for taking time to read this... We would LOVE LOVE LOVE to have the artist visit, paint, enjoy the day with Barb and all her fiends, and make a GREAT memory for all involved. Please let me know what I can do if anything to help prepare of this event! I'm SOOOOOO excited...

Kindest Regards,
Ken

On Sep 12, 2015, at 9:46 AM, Barb Ehresman <barb@atrecycle.com> wrote:

On 9/11/15, 7:18 PM, "Brenda Thompson" <bren429@yahoo.com> wrote:

Hello Ehresmans,
The Community Art Center is hosting PlenAir painters in Pontiac on Saturday, September 26. They would like to set up easels and paint historic homes and/or interesting landscape. Your house is an old one which is noted as the Jenkins House built about 1890.

We wonder if you would allow artists to set up in your yard to paint. They are not to go on porches or beyond fences. If you do say "Yes", and you have more history of the house, we would love to know it.

Sincerely,
Brenda Thompson
Community Art Center Member and Historical Society Member
815-674-3657

Sent from my iPhone

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RE: Request from Community Art Center

Thursday, September 17, 2015 7:48 AM

S

From: "Barb Ehresman" <Barb@atrecycle.com>

To: "Brenda Thompson" <bren429@yahoo.com>

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Brenda

Ok here is what I found out, Not sure all is completely confirmed though

The house on the corner, my house when it was to be built there was a house on the corner there. They took the house that was there and moved it to the location of where we tore the house down. It was very old in need of a lot of work, the foundation for both the old house and my house are the same.

Barb

-----Original Message-----

From: Brenda Thompson [mailto:bren429@yahoo.com]

Sent: Tuesday, September 15, 2015 7:54 PM

To: Barb Ehresman

Subject: Re: Request from Community Art Center

Thanks!

Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 14, 2015, at 9:00 PM, Barb Ehresman <Barb@atrecycle.com> wrote:

> the only thing I can tell you about the house is that it was built in 1890 and then bought by the Divendorfs in about 47. Dick Divendorfs parents are the one that bought in like the 40's. We bought it in 2012.

>

>

> On Sep 11, 2015, at 7:18 PM, Brenda Thompson <bren429@yahoo.com> wrote:

>

>> Hello Ehresmans,

>> The Community Art Center is hosting PlenAir painters in Pontiac on Saturday, September 26. They would like to set up easels and paint historic homes and/or interesting landscape. Your house is an old one which is noted as the Jenkins House built about 1890.

>>

>> We wonder if you would allow artists to set up in your yard to paint. They are not to go on porches or beyond fences. If you do say "Yes", and you have more history of the house, we would love to know it.

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>> Sincerely,

>> Brenda Thompson

>> Community Art Center Member and Historical Society Member

>> 815-674-3657

>>

>> Sent from my iPhone

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